

Earlier this year, Los Angeles County launched its Open Data website, [data.lacounty.gov](http://data.lacounty.gov), in order to provide the public with more transparency with respect to how the County spends taxpayer dollars. The website contains an array of useful information: departmental budgets, crime statistics, charts and graphs on demographics of the residents who utilize specific County programs and services, and much more. This is an important initiative for the County because it shows that we are committed to informing our residents about what the County does, how we operate and whom we serve. But I believe that Los Angeles County can do more.

Some jurisdictions are experimenting with an innovative new approach to how they serve their constituents. They are not just publishing data, as we are doing with our Open Data initiative, but they are also exploring ways they can learn from that data in order to better measure the effectiveness of their programs and services. Put another way, this new approach aims to shift governments' focus away from *outputs* of programs and services, and towards their *outcomes*.

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*Outputs* are the types of data we are currently publishing on our Open Data website. One can find, for example, the number of people who are receiving a particular service. While these numbers are useful, they do not always inform us as to that program's effectiveness at achieving its stated goal. An *outcome*-based approach, on the other hand, goes further. It takes available data and uses it to measure and evaluate a program's value – in effect assessing if we are having an impact on those whom we serve. In developing a more outcome-focused approach, governments ask a critical and fundamental question: *What are we trying to achieve and how can we measure if we were doing so successfully?*

Los Angeles County is not unique in attempting to answer this question. David Wilkinson, Director of President Obama's Office of Social Innovation and Civic Participation, states that of the \$800 billion spent on social services in the United States, only one percent is rigorously measured. At the state and local level, the states of Washington and Maryland; the cities of New York, Denver and Louisville, and others, have all begun aggressively measuring what they do and how effectively they are allocating their limited resources. And they are doing so with one goal in mind: to better serve their constituents.

Especially during this time of limited budgets and increased demand for governmental services, Los Angeles County must join these other jurisdictions in developing methods to evaluate our outcomes and how we spend our taxpayers' dollars. We must ensure that the money we are spending is having a real and

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measurable impact on those most in need. Doing so will only serve to make the County more transparent, accountable to, and effective for the residents we serve.

I, Therefore, Move, that the Board of Supervisors instruct the Chief Executive Officer, in collaboration with the County's Chief Data Officer, to report back in 60 days on the following:

1. The current processes, procedures, or methods that the County has in place for County departments to report regularly to the CEO on how they measure the effectiveness of the programs and services they provide to LA County residents.
  
2. The report shall also contain a summary of best practices in developing a more outcome-focused approach toward program and service delivery by examining methods used in other local jurisdictions.

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